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THE VOICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

TESTIMONY
of the
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES
to the
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

March 8, 2010

CCM is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 93% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate this opportunity to testify before you on issues of concern to towns and cities.

Raised House Bill 5301 "An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations Committee Concerning Municipal Solid Waste Management Services in Connecticut."

CCM has worked with the Department of Environmental Protection and proponents of similar bills to (i) fully understand its implications for local governments, and (ii) ensure that its provisions work for both the proponents and local governments.

Section 1

Would require DEP to review and update as needed, every ten years, the list of items designated to be recycled. This would be the best way to ensure that an open and public process if undertaken to appropriately update the mandated recyclables list. It is important that adequate in-state disposal options for items be available before adding them to the mandated recyclable list.

This section should be amended to provide that no new mandate on local government be enacted through the regulatory process unless it is clear that in-state options are available and that the expanded requirements would not impose unreimbursed costs on towns and cities.

Section 2

Would require DEP to develop flexible incentive programs that assist the State and municipalities in achieving the solid waste diversion and recycling goals of the state's solid waste management plan. Incentives and education are always a positive way to proceed to encourage behavior.

CCM supports this section.

Section 3

Would require DEP to study and report on the cost and benefits to the state, municipalities and waste generators of different methods of removing food waste from the waste stream.

CCM supports this section.

Section 4

Would require *annual* registration of solid waste haulers with the municipality in which they collect. Current law already requires such haulers to register with the municipality initially. In addition, it requires municipalities annually report to DEP the collectors registered.

CCM urges that (1) the annual registration be at local option (to minimize administrative burdens) and (2) they need only make information available to DEP only when there are changes in the municipal registration list.

Section 5

Would require DEP to study the economic feasibility of State purchase and ownership of solid waste disposal areas. Current in-state disposal capacity is woefully inadequate, forcing the hauling of solid waste to out-of-state facilities – this increases the cost of disposal significantly. Ensuring adequate in-state disposal capacity, while at the same time increasing recycling, will be beneficial to the entire state.

CCM supports this section.

Section 7

Would require DEP to update the state solid waste management plan every ten years. This would ensure that the most up-to-date information and goals are included and that it is meeting the needs of the state.

CCM supports this section.

It is important to have all of the right pieces in places to address solid waste and recycling needs in Connecticut. This bill would go a long way towards improving the framework on Connecticut's waste system. CCM would like to work with proponents of this bill to **accomplish the intended goals and ensure that no new unfunded mandates are implemented and the goals of the legislation are achieved without unintended consequences.**

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If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, Senior Legislative Associate of
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